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MY SYSTEM
FOR LADIES

* J. P. MÜLLER *



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THE AUTHOR (WITH HIS WIFE AND ELDEST SON) IN THE UNIFORM
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MY SYSTEM FOR LADIES

FIFTEEN MINUTES' EXERCISE A DAY
FOR HEALTH'S SAKE

BY
J. P. Müller
J. P. MÜLLER

(LIEUTENANT ROYAL DANISH ENGINEERS).

AUTHOR OF
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"MY BREATHING SYSTEM."

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AND THE
FIRST LADY PERFORMER OF
"MY SYSTEM."

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the original book, "My System" (Danish edition, 1904; English edition, 1905), was not especially intended for ladies, yet of my adherents at least half—and in some countries even more—belong to the fair sex; and I trust that this special volume will yet further increase the number of them.

Girls and women do not have such good opportunities for indulging in athletics, sports, games, gymnastics, drill, and other out-door or gymnasium exercises as have boys and men. Yet the future physical welfare of the race depends a great deal more on the healthy constitution and physique of the mother than on the same attributes in the father.

These two facts, limited opportunity and greater need for physical culture, must convince us that the prosecution of home gymnastics is much more important for women than for men.

And there is yet another point that is worthy of note: however gratifying the possession of physical beauty may be to men, to women it is far more than this—it is an *absolute necessity*.

And it is, moreover, a fact, becoming more and more evident every day, that real feminine beauty can be obtained and maintained only by means of scientific and rational physical exercise; and it is, therefore, the duty of every woman to devote herself to such exercise.

And beauty is hereditary! You may not be in a position to bequeath your daughter any goodly portion of material wealth, but you can do a great deal by paying due attention to the care of your own physique and skin to enable her to feel that "her face is her fortune"; and no small fortune, either, for there is no limit to the power of a beautiful woman.

In the original "My System" there are several chapters containing encomiums on Physical Culture in general, and on my own system of home gymnastics in particular. In the present book I have inserted in the place of these a number of commendations from ladies who have written me from all parts of the world. I feel that the evidence of these ladies will carry far more conviction than could any eulogies of my own; for while I could but say: "The practice of 'My System' will most assuredly bring you health and beauty!" my lady correspondents affirm: "We have already obtained health, beauty, youthfulness and joy in life from its use!"

Again, the original work contains a complete and very concise "Text-book" of Hygiene, which has since been supplemented and emphasised by my "FRESH AIR BOOK." In this book, therefore, I am not going to repeat all the general rules and hygienic hints contained in the two former books, as such would make the present volume far too large, but will confine myself to reference to these when occasion demands. I would also recommend my readers to "Health and Beauty," by Miss Helena Gent, in which book many excellent hints and rules are to found.

There is one thing, however, viz.: correct breathing, upon which I have laid much greater stress in this Ladies' edition than I did in the original "My System";

and I have devised some new methods of keeping my readers constantly reminded of the importance of breathing correctly, not only immediately after each exercise, but also during the exercises themselves. Correct breathing is a very important matter indeed—but the only proper method is the natural one. I must, therefore, warn my pupils against the hundred and one artificial “methods” of breathing invented by various theorists, and described in big volumes, some of which “methods” are so wildly “theoretical” as to come actually into conflict with Nature. On the Continent there appears, on an average, one new book every week on “The Art of Breathing,” and I receive, in consequence, hundreds of letters from people who, confused by the conflicting ideas contained in these books, come to me in their perplexity for an expression of opinion as to this or that very latest “Art” or “Method.”

My readers will observe that the exercises in the present work are in the main precisely similar to those in “My System.” The reason for this is that, their efficacy having already been established by the practical experience of so many thousands, they are well suited and excellent even for women. But whereas, in the first book, a rather severe degree of each exercise was selected for the detailed description, in the present book it is the easiest degrees of the same exercises which are explained first and foremost. And, further, it will be seen that I advise new special preliminary movements in several of the rubbing exercises. I hope, also, that readers will find the explanations generally clearer, and the illustrations even better for the purpose, than those in the original book.

The only exercise which has been actually altered is No. 17, which in its old form was not suited to every woman. In Exercise No. 15, in order to make proper allowance for the new fashion, which demands slender hips, a slight alteration has been made in the latter part of the rubbing. Should whimsical Fashion once more decree that the hips be full, then, my dear ladies, you may perform Exercise No. 15 in the same manner as do we, your male admirers.

I would like to mention that this book has not been translated from the Danish; it has been written by myself in English, and revised by my good English friend, the Editor of *Health and Strength*—that sound, vigorous and influential journal which has done so much for the good cause of physical culture in English-speaking countries—to whom I offer herewith my cordial thanks.

J. P. MÜLLER.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE TO THE NEW EDITION.

THE appearance of yet another edition of this work will cause no surprise, either to those who have noted the extraordinarily rapid growth in professional and popular esteem of the Müller System, or to those who have made personal and practical acquaintance with it.

The original edition of "My System" has now established an absolutely unique record in the matter of sales, which total nearly ONE MILLION copies; and the growing conviction, based upon actual experience, that, if possible, the System possesses for Ladies, be they girls or mothers, potentialities for good, for themselves and through them for the race, greater even than for the other sex, easily explains the necessity for this further issue.

“My System” for Ladies.

The Deep-Breathing Exercise.

FIRST of all I will describe and explain my special breathing exercise; not because it is to be done before the others, but because it is the most important, and is repeated at least 18 times during the complete performance of “My System.” In a certain measure all the other exercises of “My System,” both the muscular and the rubbing exercises, are also respiratory exercises, because I attach such great importance to the correct method of inhaling and exhaling during all the movements; and therefore I have prescribed how this is to be done with every one of the exercises. I will even go so far as to assert that for weak people and unpractised beginners the main thing is to breathe in the correct way, and the different movements prescribed for the body and limbs are, therefore, with such people, only to be taken as a kind of embellishment, or variety, relieving the monotony. But even if you breathe ever so correctly during the muscular and rubbing exercises you will, nevertheless, feel, after each of them, a need for yet a little more air in the lungs. And it is for this reason that I have introduced all the breathing pauses with deep-breathing exercises into my system, to be performed immediately after each of the muscular exercises and after every rubbing exercise as well.

My breathing exercise is a very simple and natural one. One thing only must be thought of, and that is: to fill the lungs with as much air as possible. Certainly, there are a hundred different “methods” of deep breathing—some very artificial. I have tried them all, and have found that the chief aim of the inventors of some of them must have been to deceive, or to impress the reader with awe.

The inside of the nose acts as a good filter against dust and an efficient warming apparatus for cold air. I conclude, therefore, that the best plan is always to inhale and exhale through the nose, and not through the mouth. The only exceptions I should allow myself are when swimming—inhaling through the mouth, exhaling through the nose under water; and when sprinting—inhaling and exhaling both through the mouth. Inhaling through the nose and exhaling through

the mouth—as is often recommended, is not good, and, especially in cold weather, will be found to be rather disagreeable, because the warm exhaled air is required for the purpose of warming the mucous membrane of the nose, which has been considerably cooled by the constant introduction of cold air. If it be found impossible to get a sufficiency of air through the nostrils, a visit to the doctor is to be recommended, as, most likely, the trouble may be caused by the presence of adenoid growths, in which case they should be removed, the operation being very easily performed, and not at all dangerous. Besides which, the removal of adenoids is to be advocated for other reasons than that their presence obstructs respiration through the nose.

Breathing Exercise.

Stand quite naturally, and take as deep and long a breath as possible. Place your hands on your hips, raise the shoulders a little, and lean the head slightly back (see Fig. *a*). You must fill both chest and “stomach” with air. In this deep-breathing exercise it is a mistake to arch the chest and draw in the abdomen; the air must be held in the lungs for a moment, after which it should be exhaled steadily, smoothly and deeply, at the same time lowering the chin and the shoulders.

Each of the following “deep-breathing exercises” consists of two such complete respiratory actions.

After the two leg-exercises (Nos. 2 and 6), and after all the rubbing exercises, you may, while inhaling, raise and stretch out the arms sideways and backwards (see Fig. *b*). To impart a good carriage, throw the shoulders well back. The arms should be dropped again during exhalation.

More Advanced Students may raise the heels while inhaling (see Figs. *c* and *d*), and lower again while exhaling. This will give a good shape to the calves. Those ladies who are strong and well practised may combine the two complete deep-breathings with one deep knee-bending, always inhaling when rising, and exhaling when sinking, as follows: Rise on the toes during the first inhalation (see Fig. *c*), lower the body as far as possible, bending the knees, at the same time exhaling (see Fig. *e*), rise again, straightening the knees during the second inhalation to the position Fig. *c*, and finally lower the heels while exhaling for the second time.

When this combined exercise is to be performed with outstretched

DEEP-BREATHING EXERCISE.



a.—1st Degree. Position or Inhaling.



b.—1st Degree. Inhaling with arms outstretched. Recommended after Rubbing Exercises and Leg Exercises.



c.—2nd Degree. Inhaling as in *a*, with heel-raising.



d.—2nd Degree. Inhaling as in *b*, with heel-raising.



e.—3rd Degree. First and fifth positions of this degree as in *a* (but without inhalation); second and fourth positions as in *c*.



f.—3rd Degree. First and fifth positions of this degree are "attention"; second and fourth as in *d*; third as above, exhalation being completed in this position.

To be performed as directed after each exercise.

arms, the corresponding movements will be found illustrated respectively in Figs. *d*, *f* and *d*. As will be seen, the arms are lowered and the hands clenched during the knee-bending; the arms again lifted and the fingers outstretched simultaneously with the straightening of the legs. These extra movements tend to give roundness to the forearm and a good shape to the hands, and, furthermore, help to make wry legs straight, and to give fulness to the upper part of them.

I must recommend, however, that the knee-bending be omitted until it can be done without the slightest strain. It must be borne in mind that the breathing is, of course, the main thing in these "breathing pauses," and, moreover, being "pauses," their object is to afford relief after the more severe work of the muscular, or rubbing exercises.

Furthermore, constant practice of the deep-breathing exercises in good fresh air is the best means of attaining a full-chested, well-developed bust, a fresh and clear complexion, bright, sparkling eyes, a voice charming in its richness of tone, and finally increased vitality, energy and *joie-de-vivre*.

THE EIGHT MUSCULAR EXERCISES.

I have named the eight exercises before the bath "muscular" exercises in order to distinguish them from the ten rubbing exercises which follow the bath. These two groups of exercises might also be called respectively "exercises for beautifying the shape of the body" and "exercises for beautifying the skin." Yet neither of these appellations would have been quite exhaustive, for the "muscular exercises" are also very beneficial for all the internal organs, while the "rubbing exercises," besides beautifying the skin, serve the purpose of toning and strengthening in the highest degree both the internal organs and the nerves, at the same time helping to give shapeliness to the trunk and limbs.

All women wish for beauty and a good figure; but only very few of them know that the best way to obtain these attributes is to exercise the body in good air. Harmonious classical forms and lines can only be obtained by full development of the muscles, and there can be no fear of the muscles of the female body becoming knotted, hard or dry, because they will always contain plenty of fatty tissue. On the other hand, exercise will always remove all the superfluous fat which is the bugbear of so many middle-aged ladies. I have received letters from many hundreds of people who testify that, by doing my exercises, they have reduced their weight by as much as 40 lbs., feeling, in consequence, buoyant and youthful again. And the thin and angular woman can, by means of the muscle-building exercises, soon become possessed of a well-rounded form, far more beautiful and shapely than any that can be produced by fat alone.

As such are the effects common to all the muscular and rubbing exercises, I have forborne reiteration of them when remarking upon the special effects of each individual exercise.

EXERCISE No. 1.—Trunk circling.

While standing with hands on hips and with the feet planted firmly on the ground to preserve the balance, the upper part of the body with the head is swung round in wide circles. Firstly, five times one way; then five times in the opposite direction. The elbows must be held well back, the head erect and the back straight the whole time. When swung forwards the back must be hollowed rather than curved. Figs. *a, b, c, d* and *a* will show you the different poses which the body assumes at succeeding stages during the performance of the complete circle one way. To illustrate the complete circle performed in the opposite direction, the reading of the Figs. should be: *a, d, c, b* and *a*. The rapidity of the movements depends on the respiration; inhale always when swinging backwards (*i. e.*, describing the back half of the circle), and exhale when leaning forwards (*i. e.*, swinging round to the front).

More Advanced Students may place their hands behind the head. Fig. *e* shows the correct position in the forward swing; Fig. *f* a wrong position.

Ex. No. 1 develops all the "corset-muscles," thereby giving a classical shape to the waist and bust, and gracefulness to the body. Also, it increases the height and improves the digestion.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with hands on hips.—Perform two complete breathings. If you are practised—with heel-raising; if very strong—with deep knee-bending also.

EXERCISE No. 1.



a.—Circling the trunk from the hips. Inhale whilst in this position.



b.—The movement continued. Inhalation is completed, and exhalation commences at this point.



c.—The trunk has now reached its most forward position in the circle. Exhalation now in progress.



d.—Completing the circle. Exhalation finishes and inhalation begins.



e.—A somewhat severer degree of the same exercise for more advanced students; hands clasped behind the head. Movements as before.



j.—A wrong position. The back must be kept quite straight, or even hollowed a little, during this exercise, not bent as above.

EXERCISE No. 2.—Leg swinging.

Support yourself by placing one hand on a bed-post, a heavy chair, or any other article of furniture, and swing one leg, fully outstretched, shortly and sharply to and fro. The more practised one is, the faster the leg may be swung. There must be no pause between the kicks backwards and forwards: the exercise must be continuous. The beginner should make a few kicks only with the one leg, and must then turn round and kick for a like number of times with the other leg. Those who have had some practice may perform the proper number of double swings—16 with each leg, the last three to be made as far up, forwards and backwards, as possible, in order to render the hip-joints supple. By standing on a footstool, one is enabled to straighten the instep during the swinging. Figs. *a* and *b* show how far the leg is swung in the first 13 double kicks; and Fig. *c* shows how far up, forwards, it should go in the three last longer swings.

In this exercise respiration should not coincide with the measure of the movements; one must always remember to breathe quietly and deeply all the time.

More Advanced Students may place both hands on the hips while swinging the leg; in this way the movement has the additional advantage of serving as a good balancing exercise (see Fig. *d*).

This exercise gives a good shape to the thighs and the lower portion of the back, makes the loins slender, and the hips graceful and well-rounded.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, consisting of two complete breathings, the inhaling performed with arms outstretched, because it immediately succeeds a leg-exercise.

EXERCISE No. 2.



a.—This figure shows the backward limit of the short swing of the leg.



b.—And this figure the forward limit. Breathe quietly and deeply, one respiration to several swings.



c.—Finish the exercise with three long swings, as this.



d.—When strong from practice you may dispense with chair as support, and place both hands on hips.

To be performed 16 times with each leg.

EXERCISE No. 3.—Trunk raising.

Lie down on the floor, and place the toes under some article of furniture, such as a chest of drawers (if this affords insufficient room for the feet, the bottom drawer may be pulled out half-way). Raise the body into a sitting posture, and lower it again, performing these movements several times. The beginner may assist herself both in lowering and raising the body with her arms (see Fig. *a*); but after some practice the hands should be placed on the hips (see Fig. *b*). Inhale when going backwards, exhale when raising the body. Always remember to lean well forward, as this is excellent for the digestion.

More Advanced Students may place the hands behind the head, and, later on, should perform the raising and lowering of the body the regulation number of times, viz., twelve. The elbows must be held well back, the head erect the whole time. Fig. *c* shows the correct way, and Fig. *d* a very bad position.

Young and very strong ladies may sit on a stool or ordinary chair and do the same exercise (see Figs. *e* and *f*). When performing this severe degree of No. 3, the breath must be inhaled quickly, and then held for a couple of seconds while the head is down, exhaling only when the body has been again raised half-way.

This exercise imparts a classical shape to the shins, the lower part of the abdomen, and the groins. It serves in the highest degree to strengthen the peritoneum and the whole of the abdominal region, and is therefore of the greatest value to young women; for if every girl, from her youth onwards, were to perform only the 12 movements of this exercise regularly every day, protracted, painful and dangerous childbirth would become a thing of the past (excepting always such a case as that of a woman with contracted pelvis).

A similar exercise to this one is often to be seen in other works on physical culture, but never with any recommendation as to supporting the feet. Yet, if a firm hold be not obtained for them, results will be very insignificant, unless one should happen to possess a very heavy lower part of the body and a very light bust.

The body must always be raised steadily by the abdominal muscles, not by a jerk of the trunk or of the arms.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with hands on hips.

EXERCISE No. 3.



a.—Beginners may assist themselves to raise and lower the body by placing hands on floor. Exhale when rising, inhale when sinking.



b.—When you become stronger, place hands on hips, and keep them there throughout the exercise.



c.—When still stronger and more practised, clasp the hands behind head. Back to be quite straight, elbows kept well back.



d.—Not like this, which is all wrong. Raise the body steadily, and not with a jerk.



e.—The severest form of this exercise. Should be practised only when one is very strong.



f.—Inhale quickly before coming into this position, and commence exhaling when half-way back.

To be performed 12 times in either degree.

EXERCISE No. 4.—Trunk twisting (with “side-bending”).

Place yourself, with the hands clenched, as shown in Fig. *a*. Then turn the upper part of the body round to the left, at the same time raising the arms to a horizontal position, and drawing a deep breath (Fig. *b*). Immediately afterwards turn back again to the position shown in Fig. *a*, at the same time lowering the arms and exhaling. Then make a corresponding turn to the right, raising the arms and inhaling (see Fig. *c*)—then back again while exhaling and lowering the arms. You should make 10 such turns or twistings without any intermediate pause—5 to the left and 5 to the right, alternately. The rate of the movements must depend on the breathing, with which it must correspond. The feet must remain firmly planted on the floor during this and the other twisting exercises (Nos. 7 and 13). The twisting must be done only from the waist, and not by moving the feet.

More Advanced Students may supplement each turn, or twist, with a “side-bending” from the twisted position, but the arms must then be kept outstretched the whole time. The movements will then follow one another in this way: Turn to the left (Fig. *b*), bend down sideways until the clenched right hand touches the floor (Fig. *d*), raise the body again to the position in Fig. *b*, and turn it the whole way round to the right into the position shown in Fig. *c*, bend sideways and touch the floor with the left hand (Fig. *e*), rise again to the position in Fig. *c*, then turn the whole way round to the left to position Fig. *b*, and so on; 10 alternate twistings with “side-bendings.”

If you are not sufficiently supple, one knee may be bent slightly when going downwards: the right knee when the right hand is to touch the ground (see Fig. *d*), and the left knee when bending to the left. With practice you ought to be able to perform these “side-bendings” without bending the knees (see Fig. *e*). Fig. *f* shows a wrong way of bending down, the trunk not being twisted.

When performing Ex. No. 4 in the more advanced degree, inhale while rising and turning round, and exhale when bending sideways.

This exercise gives classical contours to the waist, makes the body graceful and supple, increases the height and improves the efficiency of the digestive organs, the kidneys and the liver.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with hands on hips.

EXERCISE No. 4.



a.—First position for trunk-twisting exercise.



b.—The trunk turned to the left and inhalation completed. Note that the feet remain unmoved.



c.—A corresponding movement to the right, after having first returned to position *a.*



d.—Advanced degree, introducing "Side-bending" from position *b.*



e.—When more practised you can perform the movement with the knees kept straight.



f.—A *wrong* position, the trunk not being twisted, or bent over "sideways."

EXERCISE No. 5.—Arm circling.

Make a convenient lunge forward, say with the left leg, stretch the arms out sideways, and swing them round so that the hands, palms uppermost, describe small circles. The circles should be described from front to back; that is to say, the hands should move upwards to make the front half of the circle, and downwards to make the back half. Figs. *a* and *b* show how far up and down the hands move in describing these small circles. The final circles should be very large in order to render the shoulder-joints supple.

Now shift the position of the legs, lunging forward with the right, and swing the arms round the reverse way, so that the hands describe the front half circles downwards, and the back half circles upwards. The palms must now be turned downwards. The stronger you get, the faster the circling may be done. After some practice you should perform 16 circles the one way and 16 the other way, making the three last of each 16 circles as large as possible. Figs. *c* and *d* show how far up and down the hands should be swung in describing the large circles. Here also, as in Ex. No. 2, the breathing must not keep time with the measure of the movements. And never forget to breathe deeply and steadily during the fast circling.

More Advanced Students may take a longer lunge, leaning somewhat forward (see Figs. *e* and *f*); but care must be taken that the circling be not done too far in front. The shoulders should be forced well back all the time. Figs. *e* and *f* also show the hands in the position "palms downwards," and indicate how far forwards and backwards the hands should go in describing the small circles correctly.

The lunging develops the legs, but is also introduced into this exercise in order that the balance may be more easily preserved during the arm-circling. This latter movement imparts a classical shape to the breast, bust, back and shoulders.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with hands on hips.

EXERCISE No. 5.



a.—Palms upwards, short lunge, small circles, no higher than shown here—



b.—And not lower than this. Hands to move upwards when in front, and downwards in rear.



c.—Finish with three swings in as large a circle as possible, up as high as this—



d.—And down as low as this. Breathe deeply and steadily throughout the exercise.



e.—Severer degree for more advanced students. Long lunge, body leaning forward. The illustration shows the limit of short circles to the front.



f.—Limit of short circling to the rear. Keep the shoulders well drawn back.

EXERCISE No. 6.—*Leg circling.*

Lie down on your back and swing the left leg slowly round, the foot describing fairly large circles. The knee and the instep must be kept outstretched straight the whole time (see Fig. *a*). Take a deep inhalation each time while raising the leg, and exhale while lowering it. The two last revolutions of the leg should be made as large as possible in order to give suppleness to the hip-joints (see Fig. *b*). Now swing the right leg round in similar manner, describing, let us say, six moderately sized, and finally, two large circles. Then repeat the movement again with the left leg, but this time moving the leg in the opposite direction. After which, the right leg, also in the reverse way.

The beginner may place her hands behind her head, raising it a little, so that the feet may be watched and their movements controlled; but later on, after having learned to do the circling correctly, the hands and the head should be rested on the floor.

More Advanced Students may swing both legs simultaneously (see Fig. *c*), pressing the feet firmly together every time they meet. The movement must always be carried out slowly, corresponding with the breathing: with every complete circle described by the feet there must be one complete respiration. If this is done, the exercise will prove rather a severe one; when first performing it, therefore, the feet may be lowered to the floor after each complete revolution for a short breathing pause. Later on, the eight circles should be done without pause.

Now swing the legs eight times round the reverse way. When describing the two large circles at the finish of each series, the legs must, of course, cross one another, instead of being pressed together as before (see Fig. *d*).

This exercise imparts a classical shape to the upper part of the abdomen, gives fulness to the upper part of the legs, and makes the hips beautifully rounded and the loins slender. It is the second best exercise for strengthening the abdominal region, and for promoting the digestion.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with outstretched arms, as it follows upon a leg-exercise.

EXERCISE No. 6.



a.—Begin by slowly circling one leg at a time in fairly large circles. Knee and instep straight. Inhale whilst raising leg, exhale whilst lowering.



b.—Finish with a couple of wide circles, as large as possible.



c.—When more advanced, circle both legs simultaneously.



d.—Finish as before, with a couple of wide circles, the legs crossing each other in this.

Perform 8 circles in one direction, then 8 in the other.

EXERCISE No. 7.—Trunk twisting (with “forward leaning”).

Place yourself as in Exercise 4 (*a*). Turn the upper part of the body round to the left, at the same time raising the arms sideways and drawing a deep inhalation (see Exercise 4, *b*). These preliminary movements are precisely similar to the first part of Ex. No. 4.

Now we proceed to Ex. No. 7 proper.

Lean the trunk, facing to the left, over the left leg, dropping the arms at the same time and exhaling (see Fig. 7, *a*). Now lift the arms again, and raise the trunk to the position shown in Ex. 4 (*b*), and twist it without any pause the whole way round to the position shown in Ex. 4 (*c*). Inhale deeply during the raising and twisting. Now lean the trunk, facing to the right, over the right leg, simultaneously lowering the arms and exhaling (see Fig. 7, *b*). Then, while inhaling, again raise the trunk, lift the arms (Ex. 4, *c*), and twist round to the left (Ex. 4, *b*). Now, for the second time, lean the body, fronting the left, over the left leg, while exhaling and lowering the arms (Fig. 7, *a*). And so on, alternately from one side to the other. Perform in all ten “twistings” in upright posture, and ten “forward leanings” (five to the left and five to the right).

What I have said in Ex. No. 4 about not moving the feet, and about the rapidity of the movements, applies here also to Ex. No. 7.

More Advanced Students should keep the arms outstretched the whole time, and instead of twisting in the vertical position as above described, should turn about while still in the leaning posture. The movements would then be as follows: From the position in Ex. 4 (*b*), lean to the left (see Fig. 7, *c*), twist the body round while still leaning over the left leg, and without raising the body, as shown in Fig. 7, *d*. Now bend the whole way over to the right (Fig. 7, *e*), turn round to the position Fig. 7, *f*, swing back again the whole way over to the left (Fig. 7, *c*), turn round (Fig. 7, *d*), move again to the right (Fig. 7, *e*), and so on. Carried out in this more advanced degree, the exercise is composed of only two beats: the “twisting” and the “forward leaning” to the opposite side. But now the breath must be inhaled during the twisting, and exhaled when moving over to the opposite side. It is a great mistake to bend too much downwards with the back curved and the head drooping. The head must be kept erect the whole time, and the twistings must be performed with a straight or hollowed back, as this has a better effect on the spinal column.

EXERCISE No. 7.



a.—Stand erect, hands clenched, feet well separated. Turn body (not the feet) round to left, at same time raising arms to horizontal position and inhaling. Then bend body over to left as above, exhaling whilst so doing.



b.—Having returned to the erect position, turn round and repeat the movement to the other side. Afterwards repeat first movement and so on.



c.—A more advanced form of the exercise. The arms are here kept outstretched the whole time.



d.—Turning the trunk round whilst still leaning to the left.



e.—The corresponding leaning over of the body to the right side—



f.—And the turning of the trunk round whilst still leaning to the right.

This exercise tones up the kidneys and the internal organs, imparts a classical shape to the waist, ensures a good carriage, elasticity, suppleness and gracefulness of body, and when correctly performed is the best possible exercise for increasing the height.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with hands on hips.

EXERCISE No. 8.—Body lowering (with arm bending).

Stand facing the end of the bed, a heavy chair, a chest of drawers, or a window-frame; place the hands upon the top rail, or the edge, and then lean forward, bending and straightening the arms several times. After a little practice the regulation number of arm-bendings, twelve, should be performed. If the piece of furniture be fairly high, and the operator stand near it (see Fig. *a*), this exercise will be found to be a very easy one, and very suitable for elderly ladies, and Ex. No. 8 may be performed in this manner without the slightest risk of any over-strain, even if the operator be of very advanced age.

By standing farther away from the support, the exercise is, of course, made more difficult (see Fig. *b*). As may have been noticed, whereas in all the other exercises the breath is to be inhaled when going upwards or backwards, and exhaled when going downwards or forwards, in this Ex. No. 8 the exact opposite is the case. Here one must inhale when going downwards, because the elbows move outwards and the chest is expanded, and exhale while raising the body.

More Advanced Students may perform the exercise on the floor, supporting themselves on the hands and toes. The hands must be turned a little, with the finger tips pointing inwards. Each time the arms are bent, the head may be turned sideways (see Fig. *c*). By this means the body may be sunk nearer the floor, and there will be less risk of any dust from the floor or carpet being drawn into the nostrils. Moreover, this turning of the head to alternate sides makes a good exercise for the neck. It is very important that the body be kept straight the whole time. It is a mistake to thrust out the seat, as shown in Fig. *d*, or to allow the stomach to sink downwards, as seen in Fig. *e*.

When stronger, one leg may be raised each time the body is lowered by the arms (see Fig. *f*). The knee must be kept quite rigid, and the instep straightened each time. The last mentioned move-

EXERCISE No. 8.



a.—The simplest degree. Stand near a fairly high piece of furniture, lean forward in position shown above, and bend and straighten the arms. Inhale when bending, exhale when straightening.



b.—A slightly severer form—standing further away, and using a lower piece of furniture.



c.—A more advanced form of the same exercise performed on the floor. Body and legs straight, supported on hands and toes. Turn the head to side when near the floor to avoid inhaling dust



d.—A *wrong* position. Trunk and legs must be held in one straight line



e.—Another *wrong* position, going to the other extreme. Keep body and legs straight and rigid.



f.—A still more advanced form of the exercise. Here each leg is raised alternately as the body is lowered.

ment is also a good foot exercise. Each leg should be raised alternately.

Ex. No. 8 makes the upper arm round and full, develops the breast, and imparts a good shape to the whole of the back and to the loins.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with hands on hips, but in this instance, and even in the case of strong and advanced students, always without heel-raising or knee-bending; the whole to be repeated three times; that is to say, six complete deep-breathings altogether, as it immediately precedes the bath. It is quite the proper thing to be in a perspiration before the bath. I may even say that the more one is perspiring, the colder may be the water which one will be able to bear, and the more enjoyable it will be. But there should be sufficient pause to allow the respiration, and the pulsation of the heart especially, to have become almost normal before taking the bath.

THE BATH.

(To be taken after Exercise 8 and before commencing the Rubbing Exercises.)

The original edition of "My System" contains some very detailed directions as to how, not only a douche, but also a full bath, may always be readily obtained by means of a small portable tub, of which an illustrated description is also given; furthermore, full instructions, with four illustrations, are included as to the drying of the body with an ordinary towel. It should be remembered, however, that the said book was written for Continental people, with whom the daily bath was not at that time a general custom. I say "was," because I flatter myself since then I have done something towards making the daily bath a popular institution on the Continent. In this special edition such instructions would be, of course, unnecessary: there is certainly no need for me to teach English ladies how to bathe! I will, therefore, confine myself to recommending my lady readers to take their daily bath here at this juncture: that is, after having performed the eight "muscular exercises" and all the prescribed deep-breathing exercises. In very warm weather only, or in hot climates, is it advisable that the bath be taken last of all, when all the exercises should be done without clothing, a "muscular" exercise and a rubbing exercise being performed alternately, in the following order, for instance: Nos. 11, 10, 1, 12, 2, 13, 3, 14, 4, 15, 5, 16, 6, 17, 7, 18, 8, bath, drying of body, and No. 9. Each exercise must be followed by the deep-breathing exercise apportioned to it. If you are very busy in the morning, you may divide the System, taking the eight muscular exercises with the water-bath then (in very cold weather proceed as follows: Bath and then dress before doing the exercises), and the rubbing exercises with air-bath in the evening before going to bed. If you have plenty of time, it is a good idea to do the whole System (18 exercises and bath) in the morning, repeating the rubbing exercises with air-bath before going to bed.

As I have observed of late that there has been some argument in England against the daily bath, I will take this occasion to say a few words concerning this matter. Dr. John H. Clarke has written that the daily bath is both unnecessary and dangerous. This is an astonishing fallacy, comprehensible only when one remembers that doctors acquire their experience mainly from sick people. It should

be borne in mind that we are speaking only of the daily short dip, the douche or morning sluice, in the bathroom or bedroom, and not of a long swim or of an exhausting Turkish bath indulged in every day. Dr. Clarke is quite right when stating that the daily washing with soap of the whole body is harmful, as it deprives the skin of too much natural oil. But it is this very fact which is, I think, the cause of the misapprehension under which Dr. Clarke and the other opponents of the daily bath are labouring: they entertain the false opinion that the bath is always taken only as a means of cleansing; in which connection I would point out that, in most cases, a daily air-bath with my rubbing exercises, or with any other dry-rubbing, of the whole skin surface, would be quite sufficient when combined with a weekly warm water bath and soap. Neither is the daily bath necessary for hardening purposes; in which respect, again, the air-bath cannot be too strongly recommended, because, being of a mild nature, it is suited to all those who are none too strong, or who suffer from nerves, and to whom the cold bath causes shock, and who cannot use the warm bath with advantage, because they are unable to bear the cold sluice which should always follow the warm bath in order to produce the necessary reaction.

No, the daily bath is indulged in, first and foremost, for refreshing purposes. Is there anything in the world more refreshing than the morning douche or dip? and especially when we derive actual pleasure from taking it rather cold? But, as I have already said a good deal concerning air- and water-bathing in my "Fresh Air Book," instead of repeating it here, I will refer my readers to that work.

THE RUBBING EXERCISES.

(To follow the Bath.)

These are scientific gymnastic movements, combined with a stroking or rubbing of the skin, whereby the entire surface of the body by degrees gets thoroughly and systematically polished. The rubbing is done with the palms of the hands, and to begin with should be merely a simple friction, or stroking, of the skin; but, later on, as one's strength increases, it should be so vigorous that it becomes a sort of massage, if not for the internal muscles more removed from the surface, at any rate, for the thousands of small muscles connected with the vessels of the skin, which are strengthened and developed more in this manner than by any other mode of procedure whatever. The limbs, on the whole, get rubbed more towards the body than away from the body; and it should be remembered that more strength should be exerted when rubbing in towards the body. If the skin be inclined to chafe, it is a good plan to rub a little vaseline, lanoline, or other emollient on the sensitive parts to begin with, until the skin and the hair-roots have become stronger.

The usual result of these exercises, when performed for some time, is that the skin becomes healthy and beautiful, firm and elastic, yet smooth and soft as velvet, and free from pimples, blotches, spots and other disfigurements. In addition, these exercises impart a handsome shape to the hands and roundness and graceful symmetry to the arms and breast. The specific effects of each single exercise are given with the description of the exercise in question.

Two points should be observed in connection with the photographs which illustrate the instructions for the Rubbing Exercises. These are taken, as will be observed, in the open air; but although this is, of course, the ideal condition for performing the exercises, few will probably be able to carry them out thus, and they can be equally well done in the privacy of the bedroom before an open window. It should be further observed that for the proper performance of the exercises no garment at all must be worn, although this was of course necessary for the purpose of these photographs.

EXERCISE No. 9.—Rubbing of feet and around the neck.

Support yourself by resting one hand on a bedpost, a heavy chair, or other article of furniture, and rub the top and inside of one foot with the sole of the other foot. Continue until the feet are thoroughly warmed, or until the muscles of the leg begin to tire. Then change about, and rub the other foot in a corresponding manner.

After which, rub, first with one hand and then the other, sideways all round the neck, up and down the throat, and from the top of the back down between the shoulder-blades and up again. Always remember to breathe steadily and deeply during these quick rubbing movements.

More Advanced Students may combine these two movements, working simultaneously with one hand and one foot, repeating the exercise with the other hand and other foot after about 25-30 double rubbing movements. Fig. *a* shows the rubbing of top of foot and the horizontal rubbing round the neck; Fig. *b* the rubbing of side of foot and vertical massage of the throat, and Fig. *c* shows how far you should reach down the middle of the back.

This exercise strengthens and tones the voice, and gives fulness and roundness to the neck. If there be any tendency to cold feet, it is a good plan to repeat the whole of this exercise at the end of the System just before dressing, or if in the evening just before getting into bed.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched, because it follows a rubbing exercise. Most of the rubbing in all the exercises Nos. 9-18 is performed with bent arms. Appreciable relief, therefore, is afforded if the arms be well stretched immediately after the performance of each of these exercises.

EXERCISE No. 9.



a.—Rubbing of the neck with the hand, and simultaneously rubbing the top of one foot with the other.



b.—Follow this with rubbing the throat vertically with the hand and the sides of one foot with the other.



c.—Afterwards rub down between the shoulders as far as you can reach.

Careful reference to be made to the printed instructions on opposite page.

EXERCISE No. 10.—Deep knee-bendings without heel-raising, combined with rubbing of arms, shoulders and around armpits.

Beginners may divide this exercise into two parts—knee-bendings and rubbings—later on combining the movements. Stand with feet apart, raise the arms, palms downwards, to a horizontal position in front, taking at the same time a deep inhalation. Then sink to a squatting position without raising the heels from the floor (see Fig. *a*). The arms must be held outstretched to the front in order to preserve the balance. Rise again without pause, lowering the arms at the same time. As the breath is expelled during the downward and upward movement, this must be carried out in a comparatively short space of time. Repeat the whole movement several times, ten at most, each time inhaling while slowly raising the arms, and exhaling while performing rather quickly the bending and straightening of the knees and the lowering of the arms.

Now come the rubbings, which are to be performed as follows:—

Extend the arms to the front; rub, with one steady and vigorous stroke of the right hand, the left arm from the fingers upwards over the shoulder to the neck (see Figs. *b* and *c*), then back again to the position shown in Fig. *b* with another steady but less energetic stroke. Now, without any pause, turn the right hand down underneath the left hand, and stroke the left arm vigorously, as shown in Fig. *d*, up to the armpit and then inwards over the left breast (see Fig. *e*), where the right hand must relax its hold in order that it may slap the left shoulder-blade as far back as possible, going under the left arm, which, at the same time, is bent so that the left hand can take firm hold round the right shoulder (see Fig. *f*). The left hand then strokes down the right shoulder and the outside of the right arm, which it will leave at the moment when both arms are once more outstretched to the front, as at the beginning.

The left hand is now ready to commence an absolutely corresponding movement, for a description of which the reader need but read over the foregoing again, substituting the word “right” for “left,” and *vice versâ*.

Ten such complete movements may be done, starting with the right and left hand alternately.

Simultaneously with each complete movement there must be one complete respiration. But as it is more convenient to exhale during the first half of the movement, it is better to take a deep inhalation just before starting the first complete movement.

EXERCISE No. 10.



a.—Preliminary practice for beginners. Stand with feet apart, raise arms, palms downwards, to horizontal position in front of body, inhaling whilst so doing. Then sink to position shown above, heels remaining on floor, and rise again immediately. Exhale during sinking and raising of body. Repeat up to ten times.



b.—Commence in this position and rub with one steady, brisk stroke upwards on upper surface from fingers—



c.—To neck, and back again to the point from which you started.



d.—Having returned to position *b*, turn the right hand to under surface, and make a vigorous stroke up to armpit (illustration shows this movement half completed)—



e.—Then inwards over the left breast, at which point the right hand leaves the body.



f.—Pass the right hand under left arm, and slap left shoulder-blade as far back as possible, the left hand at same time grasping the right shoulder.

More Advanced Students may combine these rubbings with knee-bendings above described. One bending and straightening of the legs should be performed during the first half of each complete rubbing movement. Inhalation—except in the said one instance, before starting—must always begin just a moment before the position shown in Fig. *f* is reached, and exhalation, together with the knee-bending, must begin simultaneously with each complete rubbing movement.

This exercise makes skinny and misshapen arms plump and graceful, and “salt-cellar” shoulders firm and round; it removes all roughness from the back of the upper arm, and all wrinkles at the elbow, and gives a classical shape to the knee.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 11.—Trunk-bending, backwards and forwards, combined with rubbing of front and back of body and legs lengthwise.

Preliminary Movement.

Before performing the exercise proper with rubbings, it is better that one should learn the body-movement and correct breathing

Stand with hands on hips, bend the body, curving the back, as low down as possible (see Fig. *a*), then raise it again and bend it well over backwards to the position shown in Ex. 1 (*a*) (Page 17). Now bend forwards and downwards again, and continue to repeat this double movement several times, but not more than 20. The quickness with which the movements are performed must depend on the breathing: inhale while rising, exhale when bending forwards.

The Rubbings.

Place your hands on your insteps (see Fig. *b*), and rub upwards along the shins, fronts of thighs, abdomen and breast, at the same time rising, bending backwards and inhaling. Fig. *c* shows the position midway in this long uninterrupted stroke, and Fig. *d* indicates how the hands, having finally stroked the breasts by a kind of circular movement, are withdrawn sideways from under the collar-bone. Then bend forwards, and place the hands, as shown in Fig. *e*, as high

EXERCISE No. 11.



a.—Preliminary movement. Bend the body as far forwards and downwards as possible, and revert to position shown in Exercise 1, Fig. *a*. Repeat several times. This movement is only necessary for the first few times of practising the system.



b.—Commence rubbing at the instep, continue upwards over shins, thighs, abdomen and breasts.



c.—The upward rubbing movement is in progress. The hands have here performed half the stroke.



d.—Here the stroke finishes, the hands being withdrawn sideways from above the breasts.



e.—The hands in position for commencing the downward stroke of the back of body and legs.



f.—The downward stroke half completed. When it reaches the ankles the whole movement commences again as in *b*.

up the back as can be reached. Stroke downwards, rubbing the lower part of back, loins, seat, backs of legs and calves, bending downwards at the same time and exhaling. Fig. *f* shows the position midway in this second long stroke. As soon as the ankles have been reached, bring the hands round to the position Fig. *b*, whence the combined movement is started once again, the body rising and the front being rubbed.

After a little practice the movements may be repeated the regulation number of times, viz., 20.

Exercise No. 11 is the most important of all the rubbing exercises, contributing in the highest degree to shape and beautify the entire body.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 12.—Trunk-leaning to alternate sides with corresponding stretching of the one leg and bending of the other, combined with rubbing of thighs, hips, and across the stomach, and the whole ventral surface.

Preliminary Movement.

Stand as shown in Fig. *a* (p. 45), with hands on hips, and with the feet rather wide apart. Bend the left knee, leaning the trunk, at the same time, sideways over the right leg, which must be kept quite rigid (see Fig. *b*). Now raise the body and resume the position shown in Fig. *a*, with both legs straightened, at the same time inhaling quickly. Stand thus for a moment, commencing exhalation, and lean the trunk sideways over the left leg, bending the right knee, while finishing exhalation. Then rise while inhaling, stretching the right leg; pause in upright posture (Fig. *a*) while commencing exhalation, and for the second time, bend over the right leg while completing exhalation (Fig. *b*). Continue these swaying movements, making in all 16 trunk-leanings to the right and left sides, alternately.

The Rubbings.

As soon as the above described movements have been thoroughly learned, the corresponding rubbings may be added. Every time the body is leaned over to one side during the completion of exhalation the hands are to be placed firmly on the outer side of the knee and thigh (Fig. *c*), and rubbed upwards along the hip and side until in the position shown in Fig. *d*. Having raised the trunk and having inhaled, begin to exhale, and at the same time slide the palms of the hands across the stomach over to the position shown in Fig. *e*, when the stroke is finished. Now lean down to the opposite side and rub the other thigh and hip in an exactly corresponding manner, and then once more across the stomach, but this time, of course, in the opposite direction. Continue the movements, rubbing first from the one side and then from the other. As will be seen, the thighs and hips are rubbed upwards every time, never downwards.

A mistake frequently committed is to cross the hands. It should be remembered that the hand which is undermost when the stroke is started at the knee must always retain the lower position, even when sliding across the front. And, while the upper hand is turned at this point, the lower hand must be kept always with the finger-tips pointing

downwards, in which position it is more capable of being pressed firmly against the abdomen, giving it a good massage with the fleshy part of the palm. In the case of slender people, if the abdominal muscles be kept relaxed, this massage will greatly benefit the intestines. But if the abdominal muscles be kept in a state of tension, this massage will work upon the layer of fatty tissue just beneath the skin, reducing it by degrees, and stout ladies, for this reason, ought to carry out this exercise in this way, as No. 12 is the best existing exercise for removing all such superfluous tissue. The body leanings, moreover, help greatly to tone up the liver and kidneys—always supposing that the bendings be performed straight to the side, and not forwards in an oblique direction, as is frequently done in error (see Fig. *f*). Never try to reach too far down the shin, for to reach much lower than the knee is next to impossible if the leaning be performed strictly sideways in the correct manner.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 12.



a.—Preliminary exercise which will not be necessary after the first few days. This figure shows the position of "attention"—hands on hips, feet rather wide apart.



b.—Bend left knee keeping right leg rigid, and lean trunk over sideways to right. Return to position of "attention," then perform similar movements to the left side.



c.—Position for commencing rubbing exercise. Raise body to upright position, rubbing hip and side in doing so, and at same time inhaling.



d.—Upward rubbing finishes here, and hands pass across the stomach with a fair amount of pressure. Exhaling begins at this point.



e.—The rubbing stroke finishes at the point shown in above figure, after which the body is bent over to the right side, and the movement is repeated in similar manner.



f.—A wrong position for commencing. The body must be bent over *sideways*, and not obliquely or forwards, as here.

EXERCISE No. 13.—Trunk-twistings half round to alternate sides, together with arm-circling, with downward pressure, combined with rubbing across the back and loins.

Preliminary Movement.

Stand by the end of the bed, a window-frame, a chest of drawers, or any other fairly heavy article of furniture, but not too near it. While inhaling, swing one arm, straightened out, slowly in a wide arc up backwards and down forwards, until the hand touches the above-mentioned object, against which it must be pressed downwards while the operator exhales. Meanwhile, the other hand is placed on the back as high up as possible (Fig. *a*). Having exhaled, change the position of the hands: the first one, which was pressed against the piece of furniture, is now laid on the back, while the other describes the large circle (see Fig. *b*), while the exerciser is inhaling, and the hand is then pressed downwards during exhalation. As will be seen in the illustrations (Figs. *a* and *c*), the trunk must be turned, or twisted, somewhat to the other side to that of the arm which is employed in pressing downwards: that is, to the left when the right arm is pressing, and *vice versa*. Sixteen such half-turns should be performed: eight to each side.

The Rubbings

are very easily learned. All that is required is that the back and loins be rubbed across with the back of the hand. Start from as high up on the shoulder-blade as can be reached, and rub the hand, with a threefold zig-zag movement, across the back and down over the loins (see Fig. *c*). The rubbing is done, of course, with the hand which in the preliminary movement described above rested on the back while the other hand is pressing, and the operator is exhaling.

If the pressure be applied with some force and correctly (downwards and a little towards the exerciser), so that the large thoracic muscle and abdominal muscles are on the strain, this exercise is a splendid one for developing the waist and bust.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 13.



a—Stand before a chest of drawers. Swing one arm round (upwards in rear, downwards in front) in a wide sweeping circle on to drawers, and press down hard. With back of other hand rub the back across to and fro from shoulders to loins.



b.—Then swing the other arm round in similar manner on to chest of drawers, and rub back as before with the free hand.



c.—The body should be turned somewhat to the right, as in *a*, when rubbing with the right hand, and to the left, as above, when rubbing with the left.

To be performed 16 times in all—8 times to each side alternately.

EXERCISE No. 14.—Raising of leg sideways, combined with rubbing of sides of trunk, thighs and knees.

Preliminary Movement.

Stand as shown in Fig. *a*, with heels together and hands resting against the flanks, the finger-tips pointing downwards. Without moving the hands, raise the legs alternately, sideways and as high as possible. It must be done without any bending of the knees, and the instep must be straightened out every time (see Fig. *b*). Perform 20 such leg-raising, 10 with each leg alternately. The breathing, also, must be performed regularly. If you are short-breathed, inhale while raising a leg, exhale while lowering it again. But, later on, when the breathing has improved, it would be better to inhale during the whole up and down movement of the one leg, and exhale during the corresponding complete movement of the other leg. You may add

The Rubbings

as soon as you can perform the leg-raising satisfactorily, and without losing your balance. Each time a leg is raised, the hand corresponding to it must slide downwards over the side, hip and outside of thigh and knee (Fig. *c*). At the same moment in which the leg is to change the direction of its movement, the palm of the hand slips round under the knee, and, while the leg is dropped, strokes upwards on the inside of the thigh (see Fig. *d*), when, after stroking up over the groin, it resumes its place on the flank, with the fingers pointing downwards, while the other hand and the other leg take their turn. Later on, learn to press heavily with the hands against the movements of the legs, both when lifted and when lowered. If this be done this exercise will prove to be the best possible for imparting a perfectly classical shape to the hips. It also induces gracefulness, a sure balance, and a good carriage.

The breathing may be arranged in the same way as in the preliminary movement.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 14



a.—Preliminary exercise, which may be dispensed with after a few days' practice. Stand erect, heels together, hands on flanks, fingers pointing downwards.



b.—Without moving the hands, raise the legs alternately sideways as high as possible. Legs and instep to be kept straight. For instructions as to respiration see text opposite.



c.—When perfect at the leg-raising, commence rubbing exercise. As leg is raised slide the hand downwards on the outside as above, pressing firmly against the leg in doing so.



d.—When lowering the leg slip the hand round to the inside, and stroke upwards over thigh and groin to the original position. Repeat with the other leg and hand.

To be performed 20 times—10 with each leg alternately.

EXERCISE No. 15.—Raising of knees, followed by rubbing of heels, legs and front lengthwise, and across flanks and hips.

Stand at "attention." Raise one knee as far up towards the breast as possible without bending forwards, take hold of the sides of the heel with the hands and straighten out the instep (see Fig. *a*). Immediately afterwards stretch the leg downwards again, sliding the hands, one on each side of it, along the ankle, calf, knee and thigh (see Fig. *b*), a deep inhalation being taken at the same time. Being once more at "attention," remain thus for a moment, during which exhalation takes place. Then recommence the same movement with the other leg, inhaling once more, and pausing for the second time while exhaling; and so on, raising the knee 20 times: 10 times with each leg alternately.

More Advanced Students may also stroke the front of the body and the breasts, alternately, with both hands, and may, moreover, occupy the exhalation-pauses with rubbing downwards across the flanks and hips, with one hand on each side simultaneously. It should be done in the following manner: The hands, instead of leaving the thigh and dropping to the sides, must continue stroking upwards over the abdomen, then catch and stroke one of the breasts (see Fig. *c*) (the right breast after stroking the right leg, and the left breast after stroking the left leg), after which the hands release their hold of the breast, slip outwards over to the sides, the right hand to the right side, and the left to the left, from which position, with the elbows drawn well back (see Fig. *d*), each hand begins a downward rubbing, making a threefold zig-zag across the flanks and hips. Then stand once more at attention, ready to begin again. The main difference between the long, uninterrupted stroke, above described, and the corresponding one in Ex. No. 11, is that here in No. 15 it is made upon one leg only, and upon one breast alternately, whereas in No. 11 it is made simultaneously upon both legs and both breasts. There is another, but slighter, difference, in that in No. 15 the trunk remains stationary during the rubbing, while in No. 11 it is raised from a stooping posture and bent backwards.

Inhalation is now performed while the leg and front of body are being stroked, and exhalation during the rubbing of the sides.

This exercise gives a classical shape to the calves and bust, and is very effective in making the hips slender. Fig. *e* shows a wrong way of performing No. 15: viz., stooping and bending the instep.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 15.



a.—Stand erect. Raise one knee as high as possible and clasp sides of heel with hands.



b.—Lower leg to original position, sliding hands one on each side over ankle, calf and thigh, with firm pressure during movement. Inhale whilst lowering leg.



c.—When more advanced, continue the upward stroke over abdomen and one breast as shown—



d.—Following on with a downward rubbing over flanks and hips to original position. Then repeat with other leg.



e.—How *not* to perform the exercise. Both body and instep must be kept straight, as in Fig. *a.*

EXERCISE No. 16.—Trunk-bending sideways, combined with rubbing of sides of trunk, hips and thighs.

Stand as shown in Fig. *a*, with heels together, with hands resting against the hips. (Note the difference between position of palms here and in Fig. 14 *a*.) Draw a deep breath, and at the same time bend the trunk sideways to the right as much as possible, sliding the right palm down the outer side of right leg until the arm is fully stretched, while the left palm slides up over the left hip and flank until the arm is bent double (see Fig. *b*). Now swing the body over to the position shown in Fig. *c*, exhaling at the same time, and letting the left hand stroke downwards, and the right hand upwards. Then back again to the position in Fig. *b*, inhaling meanwhile, and continue this pumping movement 20 times, doing 10 bendings to each side alternately.

More Advanced Students may increase the rapidity of the movement by degrees until it becomes a sort of flinging from side to side, when, of course, several double-bendings must be performed during one complete respiration. But care must be taken that rapidity of movement is not increased at the expense of correctness of performance: The body must always be bent the whole way downwards to the side; there must be no curtailment of the movement.

This exercise gives a classical shape to the waist, tones up the liver and kidneys, and is, if the hands be pressed hard against the sides, the best possible exercise for reducing the hips.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.

EXERCISE No. 16.



a.—Stand erect, with hands resting flat on the hips, fingers pointing downwards.



b.—Inhale and at same time bend the body over to the right, sliding the open hand down outside of leg. The left hand at the same time slides high up left side.



c.—Now swing body over to the left, left hand rubbing downwards, right hand upwards, and so on from side to side, gradually accelerating the movement.

Perform 20 times—10 bendings to each side alternately.

EXERCISE No. 17.—Abdominal movements in and out, combined with massage of stomach.

Stand as shown in Fig. *a*, with palms on the lower part of abdomen, and draw a deep inhalation. Then, while exhaling, bend slightly forwards, press the hands inwards, and move them upwards as if you would push all the intestines up under the ribs (see Fig. *b*). While the hands relax their hold sideways, draw another deep breath, endeavouring to distend the abdomen as much as possible. Recommence the movement by placing the hands again as shown in Fig. *a*. Press the abdomen as before while exhaling, and once more inhale, distending the abdomen. Continue until ten complete movements have been performed.

More Advanced Students will be able, later on, to draw in the “stomach” without using the hands, contracting it by means of the abdominal muscles alone, which will have been strengthened meanwhile by several of the other exercises. In this way one may gain that control of the “stomach” which is a most important thing for everybody who would retain their health and freshness of youth.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.



a.—Place both hands on the abdomen as shown, whilst making a deep inhalation.



b.—Bend slightly forward, press inwards and upwards, at the same time exhaling, then withdraw the hand sideways, inhale deeply, and recommence movement.

Perform this exercise 10 times.

EXERCISE No. 18.—Trunk-leaning backwards and forwards, combined with rubbing of breast and loins.

Stand with feet as much apart as in Ex. No. 11. Lean the body backwards, at the same time inhaling and rubbing the breasts exactly as in the last part of the long stroke in Ex. No. 11 (see Fig. *a*). Now lean forwards, without bending or bowing the back, simultaneously exhaling and stroking downwards over the loins and seat, very much in the same way as in the middle part of the long downward stroke of Ex. No. 11. Then lean backwards once more, and continue these oscillations 20 times, swinging forwards 10 times with exhalation and 10 times backwards with inhalation. Fig. *b* shows how far the trunk should lean forward with the back straight or hollowed. Note the difference between the position here and those in Figs. 11, *e* and *f*, where the back is bent or bowed. There is also a slight difference between Fig. *a* and Fig. 11 *d*, the head and trunk being bent still further backwards in the latter.

More Advanced Students may by degrees increase the rapidity of these oscillations, when several double flings must be performed during one complete respiration.

This exercise tends to elevate the bust and make the loins slim; and when performed quickly strengthens greatly the abdominal region.

Deep-Breathing Exercise, with arms outstretched.



a.—Stand with feet apart. Lean backwards, inhale, and rub the breasts as in Exercise No. 11.



b.—Then lean forwards, back straight or slightly hollowed, and rub down over loins and seat, as in middle of downward stroke of Exercise No. 11.

MY SPECIAL EXERCISES FOR THE NECK.

The 18 exercises of "My System" ought to be done every day by every girl and woman, no matter what her age. Massage of the face should be done by all ladies who are over, let us say, 25; but the special neck-exercises need only be performed by girls, or women, whose necks are too thin, who have cord-like figures, or whose carriage is bad. As soon as the neck has gained the requisite suppleness and beauty of form, and the carriage of it has been improved—which objects may be attained by steady perseverance from two to six months—then these exercises should be discontinued. If they be persisted in after that, there is a risk that the neck may become too thick, giving the appearance of being too short.

"My System" itself contains sufficient movements of the head, *i. e.*, neck-exercises (Nos. 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, and all the Breathing Exercises), for preserving the proper shape of the neck when once this has been attained.

NECK EXERCISE No. 1.—Bending of head backwards and forwards.

Bend the head well down to the front, and grasp the upper part of the back of the head with both hands, with fingers interlaced (see Fig. *a*). Then, while bringing the head back, resist the movement by strong pressure with the hands. When the head has, however, slowly forced its way back, place your hands under the chin (see Fig. *b*) and press against the forward bending of the head; and so on, backwards and forwards, from 10 to 50 times.

NECK EXERCISE No. 2.—Bending of the head to the sides.

Lean the head over to the right and place the left hand against the side of the head, as shown in Fig. *c*. Then bend the head slowly over to the left, pressing hard with the left hand in the contrary direction. When the head has come quite down to the left, take away the left hand and place the right hand against the right side of the head. The head then returns to the right side, the right arm resisting; and so on, in alternate directions, from 5 to 25 times.

NECK EXERCISE No. 3.—Turning the head round to the sides.

Turn the head to the right, place the left hand against the left cheek, as shown in Fig. *d*. Then turn the head slowly round to the left, resisting the movement with the force of the left arm. When the head is turned well to the left, take away the left hand and place the right one against the right cheek, to oppose the head turning to the right, and continue thus from 5 to 25 times in alternate directions.



a.—Bend the head down, clasp hands at the back, then raise head slowly, resisting upward movement by pressure with hands.



b.—The head being forced well back, bend it forwards and downwards again resisting the movement by upward pressure of hands placed under the chin. Repeat from 10 to 50 times.



c.—Lean head over towards right shoulder, then move over to the left, resisting its movement by pressure in contrary direction with left hand. Reverse movement, now opposing by pressure of right hand. Repeat from 5 to 25 times.



d.—Turn head well to right, then return to left, resisting the movement by pressure of left hand. Reverse movement, opposing with pressure by right hand. Repeat from 5 to 25 times.

MY SPECIAL FOOT EXERCISES

ought to be done by all girls and women whose feet are weak or lack beauty of form. The arch of the feet is really an important point as regards beauty, and even the most shapely foot is improved by a symmetrically-arched instep. Besides which, my Foot Exercises are a never-failing means of warming the feet in a few minutes. They may be performed at any time of the day, when you are sitting in a chair, or when lying in bed just before going to sleep.

FOOT EXERCISE No. 1.—Double-bendings of the feet.

This exercise falls into a measure of four beats:—

- 1st Beat.*—Bend the foot upwards at the ankle, as well as the toes, as much as possible. (See Fig. *a.*)
- 2nd Beat.*—Bend the toes downwards without moving the foot at the ankle. (See Fig. *b.*)
- 3rd Beat.*—Straighten the ankle while the toes are still bent as much as possible. (See Fig. *c.*)
- 4th Beat.*—Bend the toes upwards, while the ankle is still held quite rigid. (See Fig. *d.*)

To begin with, move one foot alone; later on, both feet at the same time. When this exercise has been learned, do not count each beat, but only each complete movement, repeating the whole until you are tired.

FOOT EXERCISE No. 2.—Rotation of the feet.

While the leg is kept stationary, the foot only is moved round at the ankles, the great toe describing as wide circles as possible. When tired, exercise the other foot in a precisely similar manner. When tired, exercise the first foot again, but in the opposite direction this time, following with the other foot in the same manner. You will soon learn to move both feet at once, and you may continue the exercise until tired without risk of hurting yourself.

FOOT EXERCISES.



a.—Bend the foot upwards at the ankle, as well as the toes, as much as possible.



b.—Bend the toes downwards without moving the foot at the ankle.



c.—Straighten the ankle while the toes are still bent as much as possible.



d.—Bend the toes upwards while the ankle is still held quite rigid.

MASSAGE OF THE FACE.

This chapter will be but a short one. Too much has already been written upon this subject. I say "too much" because most of what has been written is the sheerest nonsense. It is astonishing how easily the public may be gulled by a mere jumble of words. Whole fortunes are thrown away on ointments, emollients and salves, and on various implements for massaging the face. The full page advertisements which fill the newspapers are sure proof of the huge sale there is of these almost valueless things at absurdly high prices. Let me say once for all: It is not these expensive salves or liquids which do the good; it is the work done by the hands and fingers—the massage itself. There is no need to use anything but some kind of clean, fatty substance, such as vaseline or lanoline. The high-priced emollients advertised in the papers consist usually of pork fat mixed with a little perfume, to the truth of which statement every pharmacist could attest.

In order to remove wrinkles the chief thing is to press firmly—after a while even vigorously—with the inside of the closed and outstretched fingers on the wrinkles, rubbing both across and lengthwise. Do not forget to smooth out the skin while rubbing!

In the case of horizontal wrinkles on the forehead, draw the eyebrows downwards; but when working on the vertical wrinkles between the eyebrows, just above the nose, draw the eyebrows upwards.

Further, when massaging away the wrinkles which go from the side of the nose to the corner of the mouth, or other wrinkles on the cheek, if these be on the left side of the face, the mouth must be twisted well over to the right, and *vice versa*. When rubbing the wrinkles stretching down from the ear along the cheek-bone to the neck, on the left side, turn the head to the right and *vice versa*.

When rubbing under the chin, lean the head well backwards.

HOW TO GET SLENDER HIPS.

I have very often, particularly of late, been asked as to what is the best means of preventing, or reducing, excessive fatness round the hips, and I have, therefore, taken this opportunity of answering inquirers.

There are many different means of accomplishing this end; but the best, because it is the most natural, healthy and agreeable, is *Exercise*. Exercises against superfluous fat on the hips are partly general, partly special (*i. e.*, local). The general exercises tend to prevent the accumulation of fat, and to remove existing fat from all parts of the body; finally, from the hips. To these general exercises belong all kinds of athletic sports and games, ball-games, cycling, rowing, swimming, etc., etc., if these be performed energetically and with perseverance.

But just as it is round the hips that fat most readily accumulates, it is from this part of the body that it is the most difficult to be got rid of if the above-mentioned general exercises only are indulged in. It is for this very reason that "local" exercises should also be performed. These operate either internally or superficially.

The first group consists of exercises acting directly upon the hip muscles, loosening and removing the fatty tissue placed between and upon the muscular fibres. The best of such exercises are the following numbers of "My System," as described in this book. No. 2 (when performed at a quick rate); the large circles of No. 6 (even when only one leg is swung at a time); the raising of the leg sideways in No. 14, with strong pressure against the *upward* movement of leg; the knee-raising of No. 15.

The second group consists of various massage-movements, acting directly upon the superficial fat. The best of these are: The hard massage when lifting the legs in No. 14; the downward zig-zag stroke of No. 15; and the hard up and down stroke of No. 16.

Such exercise and massage of the hips themselves are the only possible "local" means for diminishing all superabundance of fat which may have formed there. But, as mentioned above, there are many different means of reducing fat generally, and I will say a few words about the most frequently used of these.

Turkish baths are rapid in effect, but they also affect the heart, are depressing, and render the body liable to colds.

Fat-reducing pills also work rapidly, but a few years' use of them will ruin the intestines. People whom Nature has provided with strong and healthy alimentary canals will always become fat if they persist in eating more food than is necessary to compensate for that which has been consumed by exercise or by mental work. And people with feeble digestive organs will remain thin, no matter how much they eat, because most of their food passes through the system without being digested. As for the so-called anti-fat pills, these usually contain certain poisons capable of paralysing the activity of the digestive organs, be they even of the very strongest. The individual, by their aid, can cram his stomach with food which is not digested, and, as a matter of course, there is no accumulation of fatty tissue. But by this means, in the course of time, even the hardest intestines will be ruined—and then the doctor is called to the praiseworthy, but hopeless, task of repairing the damage.

Fasting cures, too, are often rapidly effective; but like the Turkish bath, they are depressing, most unpleasant, and may be dangerous if indulged in too often, or for too long periods at a time. It is very important that the food be masticated slowly, because when food is consumed in this way it needs a much smaller proportion to produce the feeling of satiety than when the food is bolted quickly.

Drinking plenty of water has a varying, or directly opposite, effect upon different individuals. The same is the case with fatty foods: with some people they produce an early feeling of satiety, thereby preventing the individual from eating too much.

Apples and oranges are, almost always, very effective as fat-reducers, and are very beneficial for the health in other ways.

The female body ought to have an even layer of fatty tissue all over it. The reason why this tissue is inclined to accumulate in particular upon the hips is that, very often, the weight of the clothes is suspended from the upper part of the hips, and, therefore, compels the tissue to settle upon the lower part. The weight of the garments ought to be borne by the shoulders. If the clothes be worn tight about the waist, they will hinder the even layer of fat from settling there, and the result is that a double, or triple, layer of fat accumulates below the waist.

THE IDEAL OF FEMININE BEAUTY AND THE CORSET.¹

It must be admitted that the present ideal of feminine beauty has unfortunately become quite distorted. Modern journalism, by means of light and chatty articles, does its best to impress ladies with the silly and injurious fashions of the degenerate Parisienne; and it seems to be a standing rule that all the heroines of novels must always be of pale complexion. This pallor, which is often described and dwelt upon as having a tinge of yellow or greenish colouring, is a sure sign of an unhealthiness which is principally attributable either to an imperfect care of the body, or to the wearing of stays—particularly to the latter. Of course, among different classes of the population other specially contributing causes might be pointed out, such as, for example, the wretched fare of the poor seamstress and her grinding toil in the polluted atmosphere of her workroom; or in the case of women belonging to the wealthier classes, the enervating pleasures of town life, the nightly poring over romances, etc. There is something repugnant in this glorification of the pale, unhealthy woman whose passions are artificially excited, but who has no real capacity for love. However interesting she may be, she can only impart a feeble reflection of the real happiness of love.

The arts of painting and sculpture have also contributed to the creation of this perverse ideal of beauty. Our modern galleries teem with French demi-monde figures, and in the Paris Salon things are, as a matter of course, still worse. Compare, for instance, Falguière's Cléo de Mérode with a statue after the antique model. It must not be forgotten, however, that by suggesting this I have chosen an unfavourable example as an illustration of my assertion, so strongly do I count on the prevalence of the truth. Cléo would in herself be a beauty had she not been treated so unfavourably. For although it is evident that the artist has been at pains to make his representation as bewitching as possible, yet she must be repugnant in the eyes of every healthy man. Ugly masses of fat disfigure the breasts and hips, while the shoulders, limbs and waist are much too thin, and are lacking in

¹This Chapter has been translated from a Danish book of mine.

vigour, while those muscular parts which characterise the healthy figure after the antique, and which denote great strength and endurance without impairing the beauty and the firm lines of the so-called maidenly figure, are in the Cléo absolutely wanting.

The corset may be regarded in our age as the typical symbol of the subjection of women. Women who are really free and who could think for themselves would never suffer the ills and torments which the use of the corset entails. Women with self-respect and a consciousness of their own worth would never allow themselves to be forced into the shape of an hour-glass, and their own health and that of their descendants to be treated so lightly, just because fashion demands it, or in order to gratify the superficial and bad taste of men who are wanting in enlightenment, and who have neither sense nor understanding for the truly beautiful.

There are, unfortunately, a number of men who, in their fond ignorance, consider a markedly slim waist with a circular cross-section—an absolute deviation from the true human form—to be the very epitome of a good figure.

But as young men become enlightened they will in every increasing numbers refuse to bestow their love on the pale victims of the corset, and of an abuse of the body. Love is scarcely so blind that a man will allow his passion to overmaster him before being warned in time by his practical reason and healthy sense. Only the ignorant and stupid could fall in love with a pair of pretty eyes, or with merely a delicately-shaped corset, a pair of patent leather shoes, or a sensational hat—with a woman's ornaments, in fact, not with the woman herself.

As the corset must be regarded as a fundamental impediment to the emancipation of woman from the tyranny of man and fashion, I take this opportunity of approaching the subject somewhat closely, and at the same time of agitating for that attribute which is fit only for the really free woman, and one which, in my earlier writings, I have called the "Muscle-corset." Hereafter, however, I would rather call it the "Muscle-belt," in order to avoid every possible connection with that hateful crudity—the ordinary corset.

The corset is absolutely objectionable (1) on moral, (2) on hygienic, and (3) on æsthetic grounds.

You women need feel no shame that God has implanted in your heart and in your blood a desire to be loved by man, and a longing to become mothers. With the moral right of a good conscience you should demand the fulfilment of these desires, upon which your health and your earthly welfare depend. Moreover, you should be ashamed

to spoil your beautiful body—to spoil it under the lying pretext, the false idea, that you wish to improve by the aid of a tight-fitting envelope—an unnatural strait-jacket—the master-work of Nature, for such the human body certainly is so long as it is allowed to develop and carry out its proper functions in accordance with the laws of Nature.

To do such a thing is to be guilty of blasphemy! And it is nothing short of a sin, an immoral crime, for such women to bring children into the world.

Whatever does woman hope to gain by the use of the corset? She wishes to give herself the appearance of having a slimmer waist and fuller or narrower hips (according to the prevailing fashionable shape of the corset) than she has in reality. She is practising, therefore, a conscious fraud—or an unconscious one, perhaps—in obedience to a brutal and shallow tyranny of fashion. But whether conscious or unconscious, the fraud brings its own punishment with it.

A little while ago, in one of the free States of North America, a bill was introduced which proposed that a marriage might be declared annulled if the woman had entrapped the man by means of false aids to beauty, and if he had, in consequence, married her. Such a marriage is analogous to a contract which becomes void, because the consideration by which it is supported has turned out to be false. Among such false aids to beauty were classed: paints, powders, sweet-smelling scents, false teeth, false hair, padding, and high-heeled shoes.

When a woman who is pregnant laces in such a manner that she induces abortion, or destroys the child within her, or that the latter has to be dismembered at birth, she is, to speak plainly, guilty of murder. I do not mean that she ought to be punished by the authorities, as the punishment she brings on herself is sufficiently severe. But in such a case there is more reason for the interference of justice than in that of the poor, unmarried so-called child-murderess. The latter's deed is, more often than not, the result of desperate insanity; while the former's is merely that of a silly false vanity.

A woman who persists in lacing herself in always looks sickly. Her complexion is either hectic violet, bluish red, yellow and leaden, or a little of each. Yet she did not take to the corset because she was ill. On the contrary, she has become ill through wearing the corset. And although it is considered the correct thing, judging by descriptions of heroines in novels, for a lady to have a delicate and sickly appearance, yet the time will come when to appear sickly will be

considered a disgrace, the result of sin or neglect, either on the part of the individual concerned, or of the parents.

The corset is such a symbol of sickness that it can only be properly regarded as a bandage serving to keep together a neglected slovenly body, no matter how much one may strive to conceal this fact with fine phrases about the necessity of supporting the back and breasts. If this were really necessary, then Nature would have sent women into the world already provided with a corset of whalebone.

Science is beginning to abandon the use of bandages, even in such cases as those of deformed weaklings and cripples. The well-known orthopædist, Dr. Wilhelm Schulthess, of Zurich, rejects every kind of bandage in his treatment of such patients, using in place of them suitable apparatus, gymnastics and massage. It is, therefore, evident that the corset-bandage is even more superfluous to a woman who is suffering from none of the more serious bodily defects.

The wearing of the corset is certainly not so general nowadays as formerly; and doctors are no longer preaching to deaf ears. The Scandinavian woman stands, in a physical respect, on a higher level of culture than do her Teutonic and Roman sisters. In towns such as Brussels or Paris one can walk about for days without meeting one really healthy-looking woman, whereas in Copenhagen one would meet several in a single day. The deplorable sight, so general in the towns above mentioned, of a lady with a waist of similar, or even smaller, dimensions, and of the same shape as the silk hat of her male escort, is, thank goodness! somewhat of a rarity in the Northern capitals. The majority of Danish women still wear the corset, and the corsetless minority are still subjected to the scornful looks and spiteful remarks of the others, who pretend in this manner to express their commiseration or their contempt. But in reality these expressions are the outcome of envy of the greater moral courage of the corsetless, and of their better health, well-being and greater comfort. But here, of course, as with many another social custom, the popular view of the matter is a topsy-turvy one. For if we look at the matter in the light of reason, it is easy to see that it is not the corset-free woman, but the wasp-waisted monstrosity, waddling down the street in her ultra-fashionable corset, who should be the object of our pity and scorn.

That the corset is objectionable on hygienic grounds is the opinion almost unanimously maintained by the whole of the medical profession. Time and again have well-known and experienced doctors issued earnest appeals and words of warning in books and in articles in periodicals both lay and professional. It is strange that these admonitions

emanating from such eminent people do not make a deeper impression on the public! Could one imagine the position reversed—doctors recommending a public, innocent of the corset, to adopt it—there would be some reason for this indifference, because, in that event, one could understand that the doctors were urging women to take to the corset in order to profit by the numerous female ailments which result from the custom. But as the case stands, the doctors are so convinced of the fearful injuriousness of the corset that from pure humanitarian reasons, as honest philanthropists, they are dissuading the public from a course which it would be to their immense advantage to recommend. This fact alone ought to induce the public to consider the matter seriously.

In several countries Anti-Corset Societies have been formed, the female members of which pledge themselves never to wear the corset, while the male members vow never to marry any woman who has not freed herself from the evil. This is all very well—but how are we to get the masses to join these societies? So many societies with all sorts of objects exist already, and each new society means additional expense and inconvenience to the individual.

Sometimes when reading a fashion journal, or when looking at a shop window containing corset-busts, I have become so angry that I have longed to be a millionaire so that I could found an institution for providing girls with dowries, which dowries could be applied for only by those women who had freed themselves from the curse of the corset. Should there exist a rich man who is interested in this idea, let him communicate with me, as I have already made the realisation of this idea the subject of much consideration. There is no doubt that such a practical agitation would attract the attention of many who, at present, are content to drift carelessly along the broad stream of fashion, for a chance of pecuniary profit has ever had the effect of exciting people's cupidity.

Assuredly the good cause would gain immensely were some royal or imperial lady to lead the way by abandoning the use of this unhealthy instrument of torture. The whole army of female snobs would soon follow suit, and the sensible fashion would spread speedily among all classes of the population.

Finally, the use of the corset, in an æsthetic respect, is a confession of absolute ignorance, for only in absolute ignorance of that which constitutes a beautiful figure could anybody resort to the corset. The majority of men and women have so little sense and appreciation of the fine, natural lines of the female figure that, in sheer poverty of imagi-

nation, they cling to the following awful opinion: the thinner the waist the better the figure!

Those poor women whose hips and bosoms are already too full, yet who continually lace themselves in in the vain hope of becoming more slender, are successful only in making the masses of fat immediately above and below the edges of the corset still more conspicuous. They quite forget that the beautiful contours and lines of the female figure are formed only by muscles in a state of rest. Many people imagine muscles to be something hard and knotty, and fit only for men. This is entirely erroneous. It is the muscles, and the muscles alone, which form the well-rounded arms, shoulders and hips, and the exquisitely shaped waists to be seen in antique statues. The layer of fat is quite insignificant, and so evenly distributed that it has no influence on the form itself.

If muscles be lacking the skeleton becomes too prominent; and where there is excess of fat, the form looks flat, despite its fulness, and therefore hideous and angular. The fat settles arbitrarily and in lumps, in disgustingly inharmonious plains and rolls, while the "muscle-flesh" always disposes itself in accordance with certain laws in the most appropriate manner, thus giving the most beautiful shape to the figure. Muscles are to be obtained only by exercise of the body and limbs: by systematic indulgence in gymnastics and sport, by engagement in some handicraft, by vigorous physical labour; while the corset is not only incapable of producing the "muscle-flesh" which shapes the true "good figure," but even chokes the muscle-roots with which Nature has endowed every woman. And such is the effect of the corset even when not tightly laced, for it impedes the body in bending, stretching, stooping, or from being twisted at the waist, and it is only through these movements that it is possible to develop those muscles which should be found here. The corset flattens the back, spoils ruthlessly the gently curving lines of the hips, and obliterates the small, fine dimples over the loins.

Let me draw your attention for a moment to the lines round the waist of the Venus of Milo. How distinctly the straight abdominal muscles in front and the oblique abdominal muscles on the sides just above the hips stand out. In place of these beautifully-shaped muscles the ordinary fashionable sand-glass figure has nothing at all, or at most a few ugly compressed ridges.

A reproduction of the Venus of Milo graces many a drawing-room, and everybody, artist and layman, regards her as the ideal womanly figure. And yet if women were to meet that figure in the

street they would turn round and laugh at it. Such is theory and practice.

It comes, of course, to a matter of educating both men and women to a proper appreciation of what constitutes real beauty of form. A man with a developed sense for beauty forms at once a correct idea as to how spoilt must be the body under a corset, and would not, for this very reason, fall in love with a so-called smart figure.

When once woman notices that she cannot add to her charms by the aid of the corset, she is sure to discard it, especially as it causes her such pain and inconvenience.

Taking everything into consideration, it is quite inconsistent with common sense, quite impossible for anybody who has given the subject a moment's thought, to adhere to the corset.

It ought, therefore, to be discarded once and for all, and replaced as soon as possible by the only natural corset: the muscle-corset or muscle-belt. Every form of corset, no matter the fanciful name given it—normal, hygienic, reform, or otherwise—is only a delusion and a snare.

The natural corset, or belt, is produced by development of the muscles of the chest, abdomen, sides, hips, back and loins by means of gymnastics, and the pursuit of such sports as rowing, swimming, throwing the discus, and walking, and, of course, by the various everyday occupations in the house, garden, field, which entail vigorous corporal activity.

That such physical labour and exercise should act beneficially on the health, it is important that one should never forget to breathe deeply and regularly during the movements themselves, and that time be allowed for the breath to be regained whenever pulse and respiration have been quickened by exertion.

The natural muscle-belt fulfils all those golden promises which the artificial corset makes so lavishly, but which it never can redeem. Of the many good qualities and advantages of the natural muscle-belt I will cite the following:—

It cannot wear out, but becomes stronger with use.

It can be washed every day without fear of injury.

It does not fade if exposed to the sun; but, on the contrary, takes to itself a deep, golden hue, becoming as velvet to the touch.

It is never laid aside; nevertheless, its wearer is in continual enjoyment of that sensation of relief which hitherto has had to be

postponed until night-time, when the artificial corset has been taken off.

It is always a perfect fit, which is not surprising considering that it is, in itself, the most essential part of a natural, beautiful figure.

It does not restrain, but promotes the free movement of the body, so that domestic work becomes a delight instead of a trial.

It makes the body elastic, agile and erect without inconvenience and without pressure anywhere.

Stout ladies wearing it appear to be slender, for all superfluous fat is not only shifted, but melts away altogether. Yet, on the other hand, thin people appear to have put on flesh.

It will never interfere with its wearer's full enjoyment of a meal.

It does not make the digestion sluggish, nor the bearing of children difficult or dangerous, but has an extremely beneficial influence on nearly all the physical functions.

The muscle-belt supports the breasts, guarding the milk-glands from injury.

It does not favour a predisposition to cancer, and is never the cause of a protruding stomach, as is the artificial corset. It does not force the kidneys, liver and spleen down upon the intestines, and does not bend the uterus, but keeps these tender organs in their proper places, whereby a great many ailments peculiar to women are avoided.

Finally, the lungs are not prevented from filling themselves with fresh air, but are greatly assisted in this most important function. The lungs, under the artificial corset, are deprived of at least one-third of their activity, with the result that the oxidation and circulation of the blood is interfered with, a cause of chlorosis (green sickness), heart ailments, headaches, cold feet and hands, etc.

As the present-day feminine attire is designed so that it may be worn over the artificial corset, and not over the muscle-belt, it is probable a change from the one to the other will necessitate some little alteration in the fit of the clothes. There are many ladies who maintain that anybody could, or ought to, learn how to wear any costume without the corset, as the natural lines of the body are the most beautiful.

With regard to the most difficult figure of all to suit—the short and stout one—a well-known Danish authoress writes: “It is a great

mistake to say that stout ladies look awkward in reform dress. On the contrary. If the dress fit well, it makes them look less stout and more attractive." Reference to the many periodicals in which drawings of reform dresses and photographs of women wearing such continually appear, will almost compel one to agree with the statement quoted above.

WHAT TO OBSERVE DURING CERTAIN PERIODS.

I should like to make a few remarks concerning exercising and bathing during those periods peculiar to women.

I am constantly receiving inquiries from all parts of the world as to whether this or that lady may without injury to herself continue the practice of "My System" during menstruation or gestation.

Now a doctor, be he the cleverest gynecologist in the world, could not possibly decide these matters for a woman whom he had never seen, to say nothing of having examined. That I receive such letters is evidence of the lack of thought which characterises the bulk of the population, and also proves that there are many family physicians who have omitted to make themselves acquainted with the employment of physical culture in the prevention and cure of illness.

The easiest plan for me would be, of course, to forbid absolutely every kind of physical exercise, including the bath, during these periods; but there are many cases where the health of the individual would suffer did I do so.

With the healthy woman who has never laced herself in, and who has been accustomed to gymnastics and sport all her life, pregnancy should be no reason for a change in her mode of life in this respect, except that she exercise some little care and moderation during the latter part of the time. Both mother and child could but benefit, and a swift and easy delivery would be ensured. Besides being in possession of several letters supporting this contention of mine, I will cite the case of my wife, who persisted in "My System" to the day previous to the birth of our third son, labour in this case lasting only about one hour, whereas with our two elder boys my wife, at that time not having taken to a daily performance of "My System," suffered in each case from painful and protracted (from 12 to 13 hours) labour.

Diametrically opposed to this is the case of the weakly woman who has never indulged in any rational physical exercise or regular corporal labour, and who has always worn a corset from early youth. Should such a woman, during pregnancy, suddenly take to a course of gymnastic exercises, she might easily kill herself, or, at best, bring on a miscarriage.

But between these two extremes there are countless other cases varying in accordance with the habits and health of each individual.

Every woman is urged to act with caution, and under the supervision and on the responsibility of her own medical adviser. But to give up physical exercise altogether while still feeling strong is enough to make one ill.

This applies also to menstruation. Women who are in perfect health may do their housework, continue their home-gymnastics, and take their bath with almost the same regularity as usual; but at the same time, it would be advisable to refrain from all violent or prolonged physical exertion.

Weak and nervous women, however, might aggravate their physical and psychological ills, and might also do themselves irreparable injury, did they not rest absolutely during these times. It is, on this account, very unchivalrous of employers not to take this physiological fact into consideration in their dealings with their female employees.

Many women in the various transitional stages between sound health and chronic invalidism might, indeed, gain some benefit from such gymnastics as the rubbing-exercises, or might indulge in a few air baths with advantage, whereas only a few might be able to stand the cold, or even warm water bath.

But what everyone ought to do as a matter of course is to thoroughly wash, several times daily, the lower portion of the trunk.

J. P. MÜLLER.

APPENDIX.

A Few Letters Received

from lady followers of "My System" in different countries.

I have hitherto received some fourteen thousand letters of thanks and appreciation from people resident in all parts of the world. Yet these 14,000 correspondents of mine represent, of course, only a small proportion of all the followers of "My System," the number of them now being millions. More than half-a-million copies of my first book have been sold, it having been translated into 24 different languages. But in many cases a whole family of several members, together with their friends, have learned to do the exercises from one and the same copy of the book; while numerous teachers have, each of them, instructed hundreds of pupils also by means of a single copy.

And, again, it has come to my knowledge that the richer and the more socially distinguished of the followers of "My System" are those who have been the least disposed to write to me and thank me for the benefit which they have derived from the practice of it. I am in a position to know that many persons of rank on the Continent, even several members of Royal and Imperial families, use "My System."

Having heard from certain Danish naval officers who had been on a visit to Athens, that H.R.H. the Crown Princess Sophia of Greece, a sister of the German Emperor, had derived great benefit from the daily use of "My System," and also seeing that her Highness had, of her own accord, done me the honour to attend my lecture at Frankfort, in company with H.R.H. Princess Friedrich Karl, I wrote to her Highness, begging permission to mention the fact in this book, and received the following gracious reply:—

TO HERR MÜLLER.

August 23rd, 1910.

SIR,—H.R.H. the Crown Princess of Greece desires me to say that she was unable to answer your letter sooner, as her Royal Highness was travelling. Her Royal Highness wishes me to say that she gives her consent to having her name in your new English book.

Yours truly,

(Signed) K. NICHOLLS.

FOR H.R.H. THE CROWN PRINCESS OF GREECE.

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND,

March 9th, 1910.

DEAR SIR,

Let me, first and foremost, thank you deeply for all the good your excellent book, "My System," has done for us. Both my husband and I have performed your system for a year, and we can scarcely find words to express how delighted we are with it. My husband suffered from violent periodic megrims, which for twenty years resisted all treatment. But since he began to use "My System" the megrims have entirely disappeared. I myself suffered from rheumatic pains, and was very prone to catch cold. But for a year now I have felt no pain at all, and never get a chill.

Again, my two children, 6½ and 9 years of age, perform part of your exercises. They are now admirably healthy, and have not had even such a thing as a chill. The exercises of "My System" have done a great deal of good to my daughter (6½ years), who had an awkward carriage and an insufficiently developed chest. She has improved considerably during the last year.

(Signed) MRS. P. PATRY.

NORTH BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA,
September 21st, 1909.

DEAR SIR,

It is now one year since I first became possessed of your book, "My System." I follow its instructions from month to month; the more exactly and punctually the more I feel the advantages thereof. I am now seventy-six years old, have always been rather healthy and strong, have taken my cold sponge every day since I was twenty-two, and have never used medicine.

Performing the exercises of "My System" every day, I find that my digestion has decidedly improved. No longer do I suffer from constipation; I have also become more energetic and more agile in my movements, so that very few women of my age can do the same things as I can. Many women of my acquaintance ask me what I am doing that I can still look so healthy and youthful. My answer is always: I am following the System of Mr. J. P. Müller. And then I proceed to show them how to practise some of the daily exercises. I hope you will be delighted to hear that rather elderly people have derived such great benefit from your System.

(Signed) EUGENIE SCHENK
(née KNIPPING).

HALLE UPON SAALE, GERMANY,
November 7th, 1907.

DEAR MR. J. P. MÜLLER,

We make a custom of keeping copies of "The Fresh Air Book" and "My System" always at hand, in order to present them to every visitor—relative or friend—who makes a stay at our house, and have been much gratified by results.

My husband performs your exercises early in the morning in the open air upon the roof, even when the temperature is below zero.

I myself practice the system at noon in the sunshine during the present cold weather, feeling much benefit therefrom, although I was born in 1856 and have given life to four boys and one girl.

(Signed) MRS. JULIE ROEDIGER
(née JAEGER).

MALAGA (SPAIN),
September 19th, 1909.

DEAR MR. MÜLLER,

I thank you herewith most heartily for all the good you have done me by your System. I am quite enthusiastic about it, and am proud of being a participant in your great work.

Until three months ago I suffered dreadfully from constipation, and was very wretched and feeble. I began secretly (you know what prejudices prevail here!) to practise your System, and to follow all your rules (excepting the sunbaths).

Now, three months later, my digestion is completely in order, and my muscles are well developed. . . . In the beginning I sometimes got a slight stitch in the heart,* particularly after Exs. 3 and 7, although my heart is quite sound. But now I do the exercises without the slightest discomfort.

(Signed) LOLA ZIMMERMANN.

LUBECK (GERMANY),
November 4th, 1907.

DEAR MR. J. P. MÜLLER,

My doctor had prescribed a course of massage for me because I had become so stout. I had heard an acquaintance speak about "My System," so I bought a book and showed it to my doctor. He was very appreciative about it, but he laid a wager with me that I would not persevere with it for one year.

That was two years ago; it is therefore a long time since I won the wager, but I have found the "Müllering" so pleasant a habit, and one which tones up my whole body so well, that I intend to continue it for the future. I have already lost 20 lbs. in weight, and have found that my skin, formerly very sensitive, has become firmer and stronger. Another gratifying point is that my doctor has recommended the "Müllering" for the hardening of my children.

MRS. S. M.

* (AUTHOR'S NOTE.—The lady had neglected to breathe correctly.)

MOSCOW (RUSSIA),
July 20th, 1910.

DEAR MR. MÜLLER,

I have done all the exercises every day for one year, and feel all the better for them. Formerly I had always suffered from cold feet, but do so now no more. I used to get tired very quickly, but now can take a long walk without experiencing the slightest fatigue. I can tell you another thing. Previously when I went home from the office—where I have been occupied for 11 years, every day from nine to six o'clock, with one and a half hour's interval at noon—I was always very tired. But now I am fresh and merry, notwithstanding that I have, since my mother's death, many more duties to perform at home which I cannot attend to until my office hours are over. I am firmly convinced that it is all due to the exercise and the daily cold bath. . . . (Signed) LOUISE TOEHUS.

VIENNA, III., 4
 SCHÜTZENGASSE 15 (AUSTRIA).

DEAR MR. MÜLLER,

I have performed your system now for more than a year. . . . I am 23 years old, and have suffered since my fifteenth year from spasms which invariably accompanied the monthly courses. Pains in the mammary glands, occurring always about eight days before a period, have been so severe that, several times, I have been compelled to consult a doctor. But all "medicaments" proved of no avail, until I took up the "Müllering." Now I am never troubled either with the spasms, the pains in the breasts, or constipation. (Once I was confined to bed for three weeks owing to this complaint.)

About two years ago some of my teeth began to become loose. I used often to sleep with my mouth open, and would dream that my teeth, hollow and fallen out, were moving about in my mouth. But after having learnt to breathe correctly through the nose, I slept soundly and dreamlessly, owing to the improved state of my health—which was all due to your System—and my teeth became as firm as before.

I cannot tell you how grateful I am. . . . (Signed) MRS. ROSA NEUSSER.

COPENHAGEN (DENMARK),
September 17th, 1907.

DEAR MR. MÜLLER,

Many times I have thought to write you to thank you for the "System," but have not done so. Now that I see that a German professor is seeking information as to which ailments the System has succeeded in curing, I feel I must write to you. As an old hospital nurse, I can safely recommend it, because it has cured both myself and my sister, both of us, even when girls, suffering always from *ulcus ventriculi*, sinking of the stomach, dreadful pains in the *cardea* and nerves. To begin with, we performed it very slowly and sparingly. And for many years now we have both been completely cured. . . .

Yours very gratefully and sincerely,
 (Signed) SISTER MATHILDE.

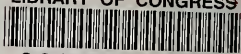
SALOKOPING (FINLAND),
July 3rd, 1905.

DEAR MR. J. P. MÜLLER,

I must express my gratitude for the splendid effects of your System upon me. For seven years my bowels had not moved without the help of aperients. But I have been able to dispense with all such things since I began practising your instructions. I have kept to the System now for two months, and already I notice greater strength and increased suppleness all over my muscular system, despite my weight of over 14 stone and my 46 years. Hurrah for Müller and his System!

(Signed) BERTHA CAREN,
 Teacher.

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